

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 AID-05 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00

SS-15 NSC-05 PM-03 OMB-01 L-02 SAB-01 SAM-01 CIAE-00

INR-07 NSAE-00 SP-02 /064 W
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O 291108Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3014

INFO SECDEF (OSD/ISA) WASHDC IMMEDIATE

CNO WASHDC IMMEDIATE

CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON UK IMMEDIATE

COMSIXTHFLT IMMEDIATE

CTF SIX FIVE IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 3189

FOR SECRETARY AND ASST SEC ATHERTON FROM AMBASSADOR

STATE ALSO FOR AID

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MARR, EGY

SUBJECT: SUEZ CANAL CLEARANCE OPERATIONS

REF: CAIRO 2384 (DTG 041515Z MAR 75)

1. (U) REFERENCE MESSAGE RECOMMENDED COMMANDER TASK FORCE 65 ACCOMPLISH SALVAGE OPERATIONS INVOLVING THE RAISING OF SUNKEN CRAFT INSIDE BASIN OF SUEZ CANAL AUTHORITY (SCA) DOCKYARD AT PORT TAUFIQ. THIS WORK WAS SUBSEQUENTLY AUTHORIZED, AND IN A NINE DAY PERIOD OF INTENSIVE AND HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL OPERATIONS USS ESCAPE RAISED SEVEN CRAFT. SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF WORK WAS A DEFINITE PLUS IN OUR EFFORTS TO MAINTAIN A VISIBLE AND PRODUCTIVE PRESENCE IN THE CANAL AREA.

2. (C) ESCAPE HAS NOW BEEN RELIEVED BY A SISTER SHIP, USS OPPORTUNE (ARS-41). COMMANDER TASK FORCE 65 HAS INVESTIGATED
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POSSIBLE TASKS WHICH MIGHT BE UNDERTAKEN BY OPPORTUNE AND

RECOMMENDS SALVAGE OPERATIONS BE CONDUCTED IN THE SCA BOAT BASIN NEAR ATAGAH IN JUNAT AL ADADIYAN, ON THE WEST SHORE OF SUEZ BAY, IN THE APPROACHES TO THE CANAL. TWENTY-ONE WRECKS ARE LOCATED IN THIS BSIN, RANGING FROM 10 TO 105 FEET IN LENGTH. REMOVAL OF THESE WRECKS IS WELL WITHIN OPPORTUNE'S CAPABILITIES, AND CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED

BY THE SHIP'S DIVERS WITHOUT NECESSARILY REQUIRING THE SHIP'S PRESENCE AT THE SCENE. SCA CAN PROVIDE NECESSARY SUPPORT INCLUDING FLOATING CRANE, WORK BARGES, BOATS, AND OTHER MATERIAL. RAISING OF THE SUNKEN CRAFT WILL CLEAR AN SCA BASIN WHICH IS NEEDED FOR LOADING MATERIALS REQUIRED FOR CANAL RECONSTRUCTION.

3. (C) CTF-65 ESTIMATES TWO TO THREE WEEKS TO CLEAR ALL WRECKS, WITH POSSIBLE EXTENSION OF TIME IF NECESSARY SCA SUPPORT IS DELAYED (WHICH IS POSSIBLE). ADDITIONAL INCREMENTAL COSTS WILL BE SMALL, AS WAS THE CASE WITH THE PORT TAUFIQ WORK, AND LIMITED TO MAINTENANCE AND REPLACEMENT OF DIVING EQUIPMENT. A PRELIMINARY ESTIMATE IS \$2500, ASSUMING TASK IS COMPLETED IN UNDER A MONTH.

4. (C) BELIEVE THESE PROPOSED OPERATIONS ARE CONSISTENT WITH PREVIOUSLY APPROVED GUIDELINES FOR CANAL CLEARANCE OPERATIONS. I RECOMMEND THIS WORK BE ACCOMPLISHED (CTF 65 ADVISES START DATE COULD BE AS EARLY AS 31 MARCH) AND THAT SIMILAR WORK BE INITIATED IN THE FUTURE AS A MATTER OF ROUTINE.
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